



Love on the internet.

How it all began. Love on the net fact or fiction? We've heard of countless of couples who've gotten to know each other through the internet and fallen in love. Many a success story has also been publicised by singles websites on the internet. For those who are not as sociable in their own society or just feel shy this might be a good way of meeting up with new and potential mates. I for one do not socialise all that much and when I came across this idea it didn't sound bad at all. What harm could it do and there's always a chance of meeting up with that special someone.

I surfed the net in search of singles websites and started writing to a number of people from all over the world. I did not have any real plan of how this was going to go. I got back a number of responses and made a few new friends. We corresponded for a while but most of them did not last as the distance just didn't make it any easier to get to know each other better. I met up with a few but no spark got lit. I felt really disappointed and started to reevaluate my strategy. I decided that I needed to get to know people who were closer to my country. I started to write to people in Singapore and Australia. Funny enough I got back some rather positive responses especially from this one guy in Sydney. When I first sent him my letter and profile I didn't really expect a reply but within the next day I got a rather lengthy reply which was good. We started writing daily to each other and it developed into phone calls and that's how it all began.

Well that was almost two years ago and since then I've been to visit this guy twice. On the first occasion it was for a short visit just to see each other face to face for the first time. We were very much in love then and decided to get engaged. Actually we decided to get engaged even before we met face to face. Tom had already bought the ring and was waiting for me to come over to celebrate with him and some friends. I remember our first meeting at the airport, it was kind of awkward. My luggage had taken so long to come out and that didn't help calm my nerves much. When I finally came out of the arrival hall I saw him standing there with a single rose looking rather nervous. We greeted each other and a quick kiss on the cheek and he held my hands. I felt funny inside and also very excited to see him and Sydney. I've never been there and it was a whole new adventure to me. Everything looked so interesting and different. It was early spring so the weather was still a little chilly. Our first stop was at Kiribili to get a bird's eye view of the harbor



bridge, opera house and the city skyline. It was getting dark and the lights were coming on. It was very windy too and I started to feel a little chilly. Tom took some pictures of us with his camera after which we went to north Sydney for our first meal together at the chinese restaurant there. It turned out to be a disaster as he didn't know what to order and I am not good with ordering chinese dishes either. After spending Aud. 50.00 we were not feeling too happy with the food we'd just had. It was horrible and the curry was a disaster. We vowed never to go back there again. The drive home proved to be a pleasant one as everything was so new to me and I was over the moon so to speak to be with the one I love. We chatted and very soon we'd arrived at his place. He lived out west in a little suburb called Wentworthville. At that time it didn't matter where he lived to me as I was still unfamiliar to Sydney. My first encounter with Obi his norwegian forest cat was a pleasant one. He was very friendly, affectionate and needless to say very curious at this new intruder into his territory. We soon became firm friends.

There wasn't much unpacking to be done since I'd not brought down a lot of things only my toiletries and make up needed to be put away in the bathroom. We sat down on the bed and what turned out to be a little smooching went a lot further. Well I'm not going to elaborate here, use your imagination. That was my first face to face encounter with the one I'd fallen in love with through the internet. The next few days and coming weeks till the end of my trip was just exciting, exhilarating and I was over the moon most of the time.

I did get to meet up with my maternal aunt. I've never seen her before and we only spoke and wrote to each other. I was looking forward to meeting her for the first time and wondered what she was like. We agreed to meet at the nearby Woolies. That morning my other half had to go to work so I walked there myself and waited for my aunt and uncle. She was in tears when she first saw me. We went to the nearby Mc Donalds for breakfast and caught up on some history of my life and about my maternal mother. She did most of the talking and I did the listening. They took me out several times sight seeing, we went to Manly Beach, Blue Mountains and just driving all over the place. I had a good time with my aunt. My uncle is more quiet and doesn't seem to have a lot to say. Every now and then they got into little squabbles and I just held my breath for fear of it escalating into something more serious. Luckily that never happened.



The first weekend after my arrival we got engaged and held a little gathering with some of his friends. Took some pictures and everyone ate up all the food I'd prepared. It was a success and we all had a good time. My second encounter with his friends other than those that had come to our engagement party were at this church he went to. I followed just to be polite but I could feel that I wasn't really accepted not even by his pastor who wasn't pro catholic. Well at that time I didn't know but could sense it. I didn't want to make a fuss because he didn't seem to feel it and I didn't want to create any waves. It was later that he came around and told me what had transpired and he was feeling really sore and upset with the pastor and some of the people there. Oh well! What can I say when people choose to be narrow minded and so set in their ways. The rest of my stay went on without any mishaps and it was a tearful departure at the airport.

Upon coming back to KL it was time to prepare for the next step of our relationship and that was to apply for a fiance visa to get married. It took a lot of running up and down before everything finally got submitted and all we could do was to wait and hope for everything to get approved by the immigration. We hit a small snag but got through it and I had my medical check up. My visa was granted and I could reenter Australia to get married. By that time I was a little hesitant as I was beginning to get comfortable with my life back here and was a bit apprehensive at what lay ahead over there. Eventually though I managed to pluck up the courage to pack up the house and myself and set off for Sydney at the end of April last year.

Tom was at the airport waiting for me this time with a whole bunch of roses which caught me by surprise. We went to a chinese fast food on the way back which was a better choice than the one we'd made during our first meeting. The food was alright, nothing fantastic. Left up to me I wouldn't want to go to all these places but because Tom likes and misses asian food so much I tried to indulge in him.

Back home I started going about unpacking and tidying up as I went along. It took me several days to get things organized and cleaned up to my liking. Of course Tom didn't do much and I wouldn't have him participate for fear of him getting in the way and on my nerves. That was the beginning of our lives together and as the weeks and months went by



sadly things between us deteriorated. The biggest problem for us was with his cash flow and business. There just wasn't enough coming in to support the two of us and he was in debt. Of course all these did not help in strengthening our relationship rather we were at each other's throats most of the time and I was crying almost daily while I was there and all I could think of was how foolish I'd been to give up my life, my teaching and my home back in KL. I tried my best to cope but things just didn't get any better between us and as the deadline for my visa approached and we still couldn't get ourselves to tie the knot there was no choice but for me to pack up and leave. It was a sad day but we kept our calm and I was crying to myself almost all the way home onboard the flight. Was this to be the end of our relationship? I didn't know what I'd do when I got back, it never crossed my mind that things will not work out and I'd have to come back empty handed and humiliated.

Upon arrival I was greeted by my childhood friend CY, he was kind enough to come pick me up and take me home. I found myself bursting into tears when I entered my home. Everything looked so dirty and that plus my emotions I just couldn't take it anymore and sobbed my heart out. How did something that felt so right turned so utterly wrong? I felt so lost and my heart felt very raw from all the emotions. I had no idea how I was going to pick myself up and get my life and home back in order. All I wanted to do at that moment was vanish into thin air or wake up and find out that it was all only a nightmare.

The next few days were spent just cleaning and getting the house back into order. It was a lot of hard work made harder because I missed Tom so much. I was really exhausted after everything got done. A week after that I went up to Penang to visit my family. It had been ages since they last saw me and it was a happy reunion. My heart was still feeling rather raw and unsettled. My aunt was very nice and spent time chatting with me and just letting me get things off my chest.

Time spent apart didn't improve on our situation, if anything it made things more strained between us. At one point we almost broke up and I was feeling really suicidal. My emotions just overwhelmed me and no sense could enter my mind. It was one of those nights when I couldn't bear it anymore and took medicine and alcohol. This would've been a le-



that dose had I not sought help indirectly. My friend CY and my godmother came to my aid. I felt lousy and Tom was not sympathetic nor comforting. If anything I felt that he was more pissed off with me and that hurt me greatly.

There was no comforting words the next day and I was left by myself to nurse my wounded heart and pride. I felt so hurt and angry and I just didn't know what else to do. After awhile we did manage to make up but I felt that things would never be the same again even though we agreed not to bring in the past. In the following days and weeks saw me loosing a fair amount of weight. I couldn't eat nor could I sleep well. It took time to heal the hurt and to get myself back on my feet. I sought comfort with Jesus and prayed for his strength, wisdom and peace. I had a meeting with the priest and before that I went to the chapel to pray and strangely when I randomly opened the bible it came upon the first chapter of wisdom. I asked God to speak to me through my priest. What he had to say was in conflict with how I felt at that time. I was devastated and didn't know what to do. I couldn't understand why?

It's been almost six months since I came back and two months since my suicidal attempt. A lot has changed, I have changed. My feelings do not overwhelm me as much anymore and I begin to see things more clearly and I think I can understand why my priest said what he did the other day. The only thing is I'm still uncertain on whether I want to hang on or to let go of this relationship. Everyday it's a tug of war going on inside of me. When I feel that Tom is trying to change his attitude and improve himself I want to continue to love him but when his old self starts to pop up out of nowhere it just makes me feel so exasperated.

Where will our relationship go from here? It is anyone's guess. I can only say that we're still trying to get back together but at the moment things are not looking good on his side since he's still struggling to make a living and his finances are in the red. If I choose to go back then I'll have to be prepared to put up with all these and also come up with a way where we might be able to make a living together.